



NEWS RELEASE

NEBRASKA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (NEMA) – 1300 MILITARY ROAD – LINCOLN, NE 68508-1090

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 25, 2011, 4:15 p.m. CT

Contact: Jodie Fawl, Public Information Officer

Ofc: (402) 471-7428 Cell: (402) 326-3179

Governor Issues Emergency Disaster Proclamation in Anticipation of Flooding

LINCOLN, Neb. – Gov. Dave Heineman today declared a state of emergency in Nebraska as a preemptive measure to ready state resources for expected spring flooding along the Platte and Missouri Rivers and other rivers across the state.

Gov. Heineman said, “This proclamation activates our state emergency plan and allows us to direct state resources to assist local and county officials responding to high water levels across the state. We expect a lot of water to make its way downstream in the coming weeks. An emergency declaration ensures we are positioned to take the steps necessary to protect the people and resources of the State of Nebraska.”

Snow melt in Colorado, Wyoming and Montana, combined with spring rains, are adding to increased river levels on the Platte River system and the Missouri River system.

“There is an unusually high volume of water in the Platte River system in Wyoming and it all has to move through our state,” said Al Berndt, assistant director of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). “The already high water levels limit officials’ ability to control river flows that would reduce the impact of flooding.”

State homeland security director Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy and other state, federal and local officials met this week in North Platte ahead of recent storm systems to assess flood potential.

Lt. Gov. Sheehy said, “I want to encourage residents along the Platte and Missouri Rivers to be aware of weather alerts and to monitor water levels in their area, particularly those in the North Platte and southwestern part of the state.”

NEMA and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) are closely monitoring releases from upstream reservoirs in Wyoming and the resulting flows on the North Platte and Platte rivers, as well as releases from upstream reservoirs located in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and the resulting flows on the Missouri River system.

NEMA and DNR officials are working with the U.S. Corps of Army Engineers and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to position the state to be ready to respond to rising river levels and flooding.

###